

Bristol and Birkenhead when their
disreputable relative
went back to cutting up dead Germans at
Frankfurt.

There he now lost his health, by pricking his
hand during
a dissection; and lost his heart in addition to
a young
baker called Degen, whom he was set on
turning into an
actor, hiring the theatre at Zurich for him to
play Hotspur.

The rest is well known. The inhabitants of
Zurich looked
coldly on the heroics of Herr Degen; Degen
in his turn
grew cold towards Beddoes and went back to
his dough
in Frankfurt. The poet, bearded now and
looking 'like

Shakespeare', removed in deep despondency
to Basel,
where he tried to kill himself, first by
stabbing his leg,
then by tearing off the bandages in
hospital, until the
limb gangrened and had to be amputated.

He recovered,
in body, and seemingly in mind as well.
Degen, too, had
been persuaded to return to him. Yet as soon
as he was
well enough to go out, he took the
opportunity to pro-
cure poison, came back to the hospital, and
died un-

conscious the same night (26th January,
1849), In his
bosom lay a pencilled bequest of a
stomach-pump and
a case of champagne: 1 am food for what I
am good
for—worms ... I ought to have been
among other
things a good poet. Life was too great a bore
on one peg
and that a bad one/

But though Death's Jester lay now quiet at
last in the
cypress-shade of the hospital-cemetery at

Zurich, the jest
was not ended. His works remained, to
become in their
turn the tennis-balls of chance. His family
wanted them
safely destroyed—all except those of an
innocuous medical
nature. Only Zoe Bong, the cousin who is
said to have
felt for him an attachment he could not
return, and the
faithful Kelsall resisted this proposal; and,
through Kelsall,
Death's Jest-Book appeared in 1850, followed
a year later
by a volume of poems. But a new generation
of writers